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Catalogue continued on next page of cover.

BILL DETRICK,

—OR—

THE MYSTERY OF OLIVER'S FERRY.

—A—

MELO-DRAMA,

—IN—

THREE ACTS,

—BY—

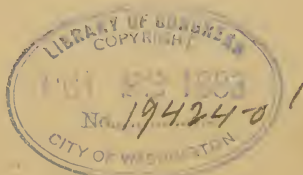
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BILL DETRICK.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Bill Detrick, *Evil genius of Perth.*
Walter Kippen,
Jack Detrick,
William Lewis,
Old Oliver, *The Ferryman.*
John Hanson,
Mrs. Kippen,
Hester Detrick,
Old Mrs. Oliver,

Time—The year 183—

Place—Perth, Ontario, Canada, and Oliver's Ferry, six miles from
Perth.

TMP 96-006643

BILL DETRICK.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The dock at Oliver's Ferry, Night—Water landscape, showing Ridean River and Lake in the distance—Profile of dock, with John Hanson standing on it, L. H.—Set water—Ferry boat on casters, to be pulled of R. H.—Bill Detrick and Old Oliver in boat—trap open behind set water and in front of boat, C.—Detrick throws rope to John Hanson.

Detrick. Hi, there! Catch that rope and pull us in, and then good honest Old Billy Oliver shall pull you across the Ferry.

Hanson. All right. I am in somewhat of a hurry, as I fear my wife will be dead ere I can reach home.

(pulls in boat to dock and fastens it to spile)

Oliver. *(gruffly)* Go to the wagon and get your traps, and hurry, for there is a storm brewin'. *(exit, Hanson, L.)*

Oliver. Say, Bill, had we better tap him; I see'd his bag o' siller, and it's as plump as a partridge, all shinin' and bright. *(between his teeth)* Oh! how much I love gold, Bill. But then you know that on account of the seven graves in the ruins on the Island. Eh! Bill?

Det. *(always slowly)* Hi! Yes, we both know, old friend. We both know, as you say, and we'll know more before the storm comes. It seems too bad to duck this 'ere chap; but we must, for as you say, we must have money, eh, old boy? Ain't it well for us that we are workin' together? I brings the men on my mail wagon, and find out how much they got, and then me and my good-hearted, whole-souled friend, Billy Oliver, makes way with them in the deep black ferry!

Oliver. Yes, and we makes way with the silver, too.

Det. Hist! Here comes our passenger. Hurry, lad, hurry; for the wind is blowin' down stream, and the current is strong. Hand me your truck.

Hanson enters, L.

Hanson hands satchel and bundles to Detrick, who lays them in boat, Hanson climbs down and sits on middle seat, Oliver at bow, Detrick at stern—boat moves to C., Detrick lays down paddle and takes handkerchief off his neck, creeps up to Hanson and gags him, then hits him on head with paddle, Oliver turns and holds Hanson's feet while Detrick takes out large bag of money. Oliver and Detrick pick up body and drop it overboard into trap, C.

Oliver. He tuck it easy, anyhow—didn't he, Bill?

Bill. Yes, and I tuck this easy. (*holds up bag of money*) Let us put back to shore. Here comes the steamer By-town, and I expect a load fer Perth. (*steam whistle heard in distance*) That's the old tub. I know's her squeal.

(*they tie up boat at dock, then sit and divide money*)

Oliver. (*angrily*) Only two pounds fur me out o' fifty! Here, Bill, I know you too well to take that!

Det. It's enough. I hed to do the job, and two pounds is plenty fur hush money!

Oliver. Bill, look a here now, I've knowed you nigh on to ten year, and I know who was the cause uv those seven graves in the old house on the Island. Out o' every job I tuck the hush money, and you tuck the grist. Now me and my old Nancy hez stuck to you, and held our tongues, and you hev the cheek to hand me two paltry pounds out o' fifty. I won't take it! I'll blow first! D'ye hear!

Det. Don't you blow, Oliver, fur I do sware thet you was as deep in the mud as I was in the mire. So don't you blow.

Oliver. There's Nancy and I again you, and the testimony o' two is better nor one. Here's yer money, I don't want it!

Det. (*scowling*) Curse ye! Take it, or you'll be sorry thet you ever went back on Old Bill Detrick!

Oliver. I wont take it. I ain't afraid o' you, neither is Nancy, so scowl all ye like, I ain't a goin' to take yer small change.

Det. Ye won't, eh! Then I know what ye will take—a drink out o' my bottle, which will put ye in a better humor.

Hands bottle, Oliver raises it to drink, Detrick hits him with club and drags him to edge of dock, throws him over into river.

—I guess he'll not blow now!

(*exit, L.*)

Enter Old Nancy Oliver on dock, she is dressed like an old hag, and carries a long pole.

Nancy. Oho! Bill Detrick, you'd kill poor Old Oliver, would ye. But he shan't die.

Crawls down at back of dock—disappears—cries for help heard from Nancy. Enter two men, L.

1st Man. Hello! if there ain't Old Nancy and Billy in the water! Comin', Nancy! Comin'! We'll get yer out!

(*both lean over and pull up Old Oliver first, then Nancy, upon dock*)

Enter Bill Detrick, L.

Det. What's the trouble, Old Billy drunk again, and he's wet, too. Been fishin' him out, boys?

2nd Man. Yes, we fished them both out.

Nancy. Oh! yes, he's drunk again, Bill Detrick, and—(*lays hand on Oliver's head*)—he's cut his head in fallin' off the dock. Oh! yes, he's drunk again. Ha! ha! ha! And he must hev cut his head on a stone, or maybe a club! Eh! Bill Detrick? You and I hev seen seven men who had cut their heads in fallin'. Didn't we, Bill? Ha! ha! ha! Yes, poor Old Oliver is drunk again!

Bill. (*threatingly*) Hold your tongue, you crazy old fool, or I'll hold it fer you. D'ye hear?

Nancy. Yes, my dear friend, Bill, I didn't mean any harm. You knowed I didn't. But isn't it funny Old Oliver's drunk again? Ha! ha! ha! *(to men)* Carry my old man home, boys, will ye? Home to our poor old cabin, fer he can't walk—he's drunk! Ha! ha! ha! Don't you see he's drunk again? And seven o' them with cuts on their heads like my Old Oliver's got, asleep on the Island! Ha! ha! ha! They were all drunk, drunker than my old man. *(men carry Oliver out L., Bill Detrick stands with arms folded, facing front, Nancy comes silently up behind him and lays hand on his arm—he starts)* Bill Detrick, do you think that because Old Nancy is old and feeble that she is blind?

(Detrick draws knife and moves a step towards her)

Det. She devil! What d'ye mean?

Nancy. Stand back, Bill Detrick! Stand back and listen to me. For ten years my old man and me hev knowed ye. Aye, Bill, we've knowed ye better than your poor wife Hester does. We've taken the ha' pence, and you've taken the pounds from the poor devils that come'd out this way. Don't look so dark, friend Bill, I see'd the seven lonely graves in the old stone house out yonder under the green trees on the Island, and I know who caused them to be there, and so do you, Bill Detrick, and so does my old man. And now because we know this, and because my poor dear old man wants a little more than two pounds out of fifty, he has to get drunk and fall off the dock. Ain't it too bad, Bill, that he got drunk?

Det. What the devil do you mean?

Nancy. *(wildly)* What do I mean? Ha! ha! ha! You ask me what I mean, then I'll tell you, Bill, I'll speak so you can't help but understand; aye, I'll speak plain. Eight years ago on a dark and stormy night I sat by my old man's side at our cabin fire; we'd been talkin' o' our younger days, when he was a bright young man who knowed no sin, and I was a comely lass who never knowed any sorrow. Yes, Bill Detrick, thoughts of our happy youth filled our minds, pictures of our dear old parents floated back on the wings of memory, and made us for the time happy and content. But we were very poor, and poverty is hard to bear. We'd talked fer an hour or so when we remembered our poverty, and my old man said: "Nancy, woman, I must have gold, I can't endure this terrible poverty any longer." Just then came a rap at the door. We wiped our eyes for we'd been cryin'. *(Detrick shrugs his shoulders)* Aye! you can laugh ef you want to Bill Detrick, laugh ef it pleases ye, but we had been cryin' like children; Oliver opened the door, and there stood the driver of the mail wagon from Perth. "Aman to go over the ferry," said he. My poor old man took his tattered great coat and oil skin hat, and went out into the night. I peered through the window and followed the twinkle of the lantern he carried. Something made me feel as ef I should follow them, but I sat down and made up my mind that it was childish to feel so. But something urged me to go, and I went. I crawled to the wood pile on the dock and hid in its shadows. Soon I see'd the stranger get into the boat, a fine handsome young gentlemen in fine clothes, and sit in the middle seat, the driver of the stage was in the stern, my old man in the bow. Out flew the boat into the boiling, seething waters of the Ridean, I heard the quick rub of the paddles as they scraped the sides of the boat, and near the middle of the stream they stopped, I could hear a blow, a single long cry for help, and then all was still—the boat never reached the other side that night, but returned

to this shore with only two men in the boat, one was my old man, the other was——

Bill. Hold hard! Say no more or I'll cut yer throat, old woman! De ye hear!

Nancy. Stand off—(*raises stick over her head*)—Bill Detrick, or I'll have to stain my soul as yours is stained. Now you see what I know of the stormy night eight years ago. Long and bitterly did I weep and pray fur my old man, and from that day to this he has been changed from a good kind husband to a demon. (*wildly*) Aye! to a demon, Bill Detrick, and you are the cause, and to-night you did yer best to fill another grave with my poor old man's body. But you have failed. Crazy Old Nance saved the poor old drunken man. Ha! ha! ha! Yes, as you say, Oliver is drunk, but not on liquor. No! no! not on that, but he is drunk with the blood of another victim. That makes eight, don't it, Bill, that makes eight in all—eight green graves instead of seven, and another demon added to those already in the breast of my poor old man. Yes, he must be drunk. Ha! ha! ha!

(*exit, Nancy, R.*)

Det. Well, it beats all how a crazy woman will talk. Aye! they say too much, these women, but then they're all crazy.

Enter Jack Detrick, L.

Jack. Say, dad, ain't the old thing comin' slow to-night?

Bill. Yes, that she be. Hosses all right, Jack?

Jack. Yes, dad, one is right and one left. That is to say one is on the right side of the pole and the other is on the left side.

Det. No nonsense Jack, I'm in no humor to hear any foolin' to-night.

Jack. Dad, you know I'm a little cracked—so the boys say—and you mustn't mind me, fer you know, dad, I takes good care of the hosses, don't I dad?

Bill. Yes Jack, my boy, and you are the only one that seems to let me have my own way.

Jack. Dad, what is the matter with Crazy Nancy to-night? She rushed past the wagon just now, saying as she went: "Yes, he's surely drunk." What does she mean?

Det. Never mind what she means, but go to the hosses, fer here comes the boat.

Jack. All right, dad, fer right is right, and right wrong's nobody.

(*exit, Jack, L.*)

Det. Curse her, I'll kill her yet, the old hag. What does she mean? I wonder if she will blow. No, she daren't, fer her old man would swing from the same gallows that I did. But those faces that I see at night. Aye! they make me sleepless, and my rest I have only when the bright warm sun is shining. It must be fancy. (*noise outside, L. H.*) Ah! here comes Old Nancy. I had better settle with her now before the boat comes in.

(*moves into 2 E. L.*)

Enter Nancy, L.

Nancy. He is gone. The destroyer of my peace. He's gone, and he said my old man's drunk. But I'll let the world know what he is. I'll— (*Detrick jumps out and hits her with fist, she staggers and falls off dock into water, steamboat bell heard R. H., whistle heard and voice calls*) Hard-a-port! She's in, sir! Woman overboard!

Woman overboard! (*exit Detrick, L. Bell rings, whistle blows again*)
 Lower that boat! Do you hear? (*bustle and noise heard R. H.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Bar room interior at Lewis' House, Perth; Bar up R., at back; tables R. and L.; Newspapers, &c.; Register on Bar—Mr. Lewis discovered at L. 2 E., bowing.*

Lewis. Come in, gentlemen. This is a bad night for traveling. Come in and be seated.

Enter Walter Kippen, Mr. Burford, Bill Detrick and Jack, L. 2 E.—Detrick throws himself into chair at table, L., Walter takes off overcoat, hands it to Lewis.

Walter. Yes, this is a bad night, and the roads are terrible. What time do we have supper, landlord?

Lewis. Very soon, sir.

Det. Jack, go and put out the hosses; rub 'em down well, and then come in and have a drink.

Jack. I'd sooner have the drink now, dad, if you have no objections. You see it's only three-pence anyway, and whether it is spent now or in half an hour from now, makes no difference. Does it, dad?

Det. Lewis, give Jack a drink.

Lewis. (*going to bar*) What shall it be, Jack?

Jack. I like hot sling, but then it takes so long to drink it. I like whiskey clear, but then it goes too fast, so I guess you'd better give me genuine gin. (*Lewis hands out bottle and glass, Jack drinks*) I wish on my soul that that glass held a gallon.

Det. Come, Jack, you've had a drink, now look to the hosses.

Jack. Dad, you're a good one. You as has travelled the road so long knows what does a feller good on such a night as this, don't you, dad?

Det. You are right, I do that.

Jack. Then don't you think another glass of gin would do me good?

Det. Hi! Stop it and go to the hosses. (*exit Jack, L.*)

Walter. (*comes up to Detrick*) Are you not Bill Detrick?

Bill. Yes, sir, that's me. But who the deuce are you?

Walter. (*seats himself opposite Detrick, at table, L.*) Listen and I will tell you. I am a farmer living near Cornwall, and eight years ago I had a brother who came to these parts to transact a little business in the lumber line, his name was George Kippan. Do you remember him, landlord? A tall man, black eyed, black haired and handsome?

Lewis. Yes, I remember him. He carried considerable money with him?

Walter. Yes, sir. Well, after writing me that he had succeeded in his business, and would leave this town at once, I heard no more from him. He disappeared as suddenly as though the earth had swallowed him; and what made his absence more painful was the

fact of his young wife dying, and calling his name till she breathed her last.

Det. Well, what has this to do with me, I'd like to know?

Walter. Have patience, sir, I am coming to that. The years have rolled away and still no tidings. We had at last counted him as dead.

Det. I don't know what I've got to do with yer dead man.

Walter. (not noticing him) Two weeks ago while working at the plow I had a vision.

Lewis and Det. A vision?

Walter. Yes, gentlemen, I saw as plainly as I see you, a dense cloud as black as night settle around me in mid-day, when the sun was shining, so that I could not see my horses. I had not time to think, hardly, when I heard a voice call my name; I knew that voice at once, it was my brother's. "George," said I, "is that you?" "Yes," answered he, "It is George." Then in a rambling way he said that he had been murdered—

Det. (trembling) Murdered?

Walter. Yes. That he went to Oliver's Ferry on the mail wagon, and was murdered, and his money and the name of the murderers were hidden in a stone jar in a certain piece of woods near the Ferry. He said that Bill Detrick was the mail carrier; and then he described you so accurately that I knew you as soon as I saw you in this room.

Det. (nervously) But I don't know anything about his money nor him either! I drove him out there, and then his affairs was not mine after that. Why do you come to me?

Walter. Because he said that you must go with me, and be there when this money was found.

Det. (doggedly) I won't do any such thing. Do you think me a fool? No, sir, do your own digging—it's out of my line.

Lewis. Here Bill, have some sense. The gentleman may do the handsome thing by you.

Det. I am content with what I honestly earns by my business, and have no wish to increase it by diggin' after things as people dreams about.

Walter. Easy, my friend; I don't believe that anybody wants to injure you, but on the contrary may do you a great service. If you go and dig where I direct, I will agree here in the presence of Mr. Lewis to give you half the money the jar contains.

Det. (excitedly) I don't want the cursed money. Do you think that I would handle money that is the price of blood?

Lewis. Bill, one would think that you knew something about it. You act so—

Det. Lewis! Do you dare tell me that I know? (draws knife) Curse you, if you do I'd—

Lewis. (raising chair) Keep off, Bill, I did not say so. But why should you get so excited? No one has accused you of anything.

Det. Lewis, you'll have to be careful how you speak to me after this. (turns to Walter) And as fer you and yer dead brother's money, I don't want anything to do with you.

(moves towards door, L.)

Walter. Bill Detrick, hark ye! I was not sure until now that my brother was dead, nor that he had been murdered, but now I am sure of it, and I can lay my hand upon his murderer—

Det. (trembling) What d'ye mean?

Walter. I want to see you in an hour, when I shall explain what I mean. Till then I am silent.

Det. Say, Captin', yer riled a little now, but I'll tell you what you'd better do. I must go now to my supper, and if you like to ride out with me to the Ferry to-night to meet the steamer—you can say all you have to say on the way. How'll that do?

Walter. Well, if it don't rain I'll go. As my time is precious, and I can't stop here long.

Lewis. Your supper is ready, sir.

(exit, Walter, R.)

Enter Jack Detrick, L.

Jack. Dad, are you goin' to the night boat?

Det. Yes, Jack, hitch up as soon as they are done eating. Lewis, give me a drink. *(takes drink—aside)* He'll have to be careful in case the wagon might upset, and he get his neck broke. *(to Jack)* What the devil are you staring at? Be gone, or I'll thrash you. *(exit Jack, L.)* Lewis, you are too free with your tongue, and I give you fair warning to use it a little easier, or me or you'll be sorry for it. *(exit, L.)*

Lewis. That man's a devil, and he'll kill somebody yet if he hasn't already.

CHANGE TO

SCENE II.—Street in 1st grooves.

Enter Jack Detrick and Hester, L. H.—Jack has basket on his arm.

Hester. So my boy, father is not in good humor to-night, eh?

Jack. No, mother, he is in the devil's own humor, an he makes me nervous when he looks so fierce. Mother, do you think that dad has done anything he's afraid 'ill be found out on him?

Hester. I don't know, John; he is a queer man now to what he used to be. He used to be a good husband, but for the last eight years he has been changed. He has never slept at night since, and often in day time when he falls off into a doze he awakes with a start, and will shriek out: "I saw him—his pale face looking so sad—Oh! my God!" Then he will tremble, and when I ask him what ails him he looks up so dark and terrible like, and says "I saw the devil!" Oh, John, my boy, I hope that you'll never cause me the misery that your father has caused me. *(weeps)*

Jack. Don't cry, mother, I'll try and be a good boy. Come, cheer up, and do as I do; don't mind dad.

Hester. How can I help it when he acts so cruelly to me and the little ones?

Jack. If he strikes you again I'll kill him, mother! He can do what he likes to me, but he must let you alone. Do you hear, mother? He must!

Hester. Don't do anything, John, that you'd ever be sorry for, for I'm afraid that is what ails your father. Hurry home to your supper as soon as you can, my boy. I'll have it ready and waiting for you. *(exit, R. H.)*

Jack. There goes a good soul. Poor old mother, she has much to endure from dad. But if they were all like me they'd not stand it, they'd sit down when the old man begins to scold.

Enter Bill Detrick, L.

Jack. (slides down to stage and sits) Oh!

Det. What are you doing here? Have you got the hosses all right?

Jack. Yes, sir, they are all right, and will soon be done eating. Say, dad, do you want me to go out to the Ferry with you to-night?

Det. No, I can get along without you, I guess.

Jack. I suppose you could. But can't you get along better with me?

Det. Hold your tongue, and go and get the hosses.

(Jack goes slowly R.)

Jack. (aside) I'll saddle the pony and follow him, fer he's up to something. *(exit Jack, R.)*

Det. (fiercely) Yes, I'll do it. His confounded dream may spoil all, and put me where the dogs wont bite me. That's the way, do one wrong, and you have to do many to hide it. But I have to go on now. I can't give up my life so easily; one more won't matter much. Yes, it must be nine green graves instead of eight, and I filled them all. *(quick curtain as he exits excitedly, R.)*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Near Olivers's Ferry, on the river bank—stage dark—set trees at back, L. H.—water set at R.—set rocks at L. 2 E.

Enter Bill Detrick and Walter Kippen, L.

Det. It's too bad that the wagon should have broken down so near the Ferry. But we will get there in a few minutes.

Walter. I am tired, and would like to rest. *(sits on bank, R.)*

Bill. We have half an hour yet.

Walter. I can say what I have to say here.

Det. Well, spin ahead.

Walter. I don't want you to get angry, or think that I am hard on you, but I must say what I think. I suspect from your actions at the hotel to-night that you are the destroyer of my brother.

(Jack is seen behind tree at back, listening)

Bill. (angrily) Look out how you talk, sir! You can't prove it, and I dare you to try.

Walter. I have my dream as a guide, and on an island near the Ferry are some graves which, if I can find them, will throw some light on the subject.

Det. You'll never find them! You can't! But what do you want me to do?

Walter. Sell all you own, and give the proceeds to my brother's child, or I'll have you arrested as my brother's murderer!

Det. What! Sell all I've got? You'll have me arrested as a murderer? Whoever says I am a murderer lies!

Enter Old Oliver, L.

Oliver. I say it!

Det. You'll not say it again, for here you both die!

Shoots Walter, who falls over backward from bank—Detrick rushes at Oliver and stabs him, he staggers and falls up R.

Oliver. (*leaning upon one arm*) Bill, you've done for me. I'm goin', but before I die let me curse you! May you never see the sun again! May your children hate you, and after you are gone your memory, as I do! May your wife's brain be darkened as you have darkened my poor Nancy's! And may your portion be that of the damned! (*clutches at throat, struggles a moment, and falls dead*)

Jack. (*comes from behind tree*) Oh, dad! dad! See what you've done! What will poor Nancy do now?

Enter Nancy from behind rock, she carries a lighted torch and a club.

Nancy. Do? (*wildly*) I'll do as he has done. I'll make a widow! I'll make children fatherless! I'll fill another green grave on the Island! But this time t'will be filled with a villian. Aye, Bill Detrick, we must settle our account now! Ten is the number now, and you'll make the eleventh! Ha! ha! ha! My poor old man is gone, my brain is almost gone, and before I go I must send your poor cowardly murderous soul to him who laughs loudly at your crimes. Yes, laugh, you demons! Laugh; for your earthly brother will join you soon! Laugh; for I am avenging the wrongs of many. Ha! ha! ha! Shrink and cringe, Bill! Shake and tremble; for I am your direst enemy. I've kept my mouth closed because I loved you once. Yes, Bill, you ought to know me. Many a time have I held you in my arms when you were an innocent baby. But now, oh heaven! I must avenge the innocent babes you left parentless. Yes, Bill, look at me. Do you know me?

Det. Who are you?

Nancy. I am your sister!

Det. What, sister Nancy?

Nancy. Yes, Bill, I was your sister once, but now—(*laughs wildly*)—I'm crazy Nance. Pray now—but no, you gave my old man no time for prayer.

Det. Do you mean to kill me, Nancy? Kill your own brother!

Nancy. Yes! Did you not kill my poor old husband? Ha! ha! ha! I'm not your sister now, I'm Crazy Nancy. Good-bye, Bill Detrick. Go and tell the fiends that Nancy's comin'. (*strikes him with club, he staggers and falls, L.—reaches into breast, draws pistol*) Good-bye! Tell them I'm comin', Bill. Be sure and tell them that 'twas I that sent you to them with the news! Your sister, Crazy Nancy.

*Detrick leans on one arm and fires at Nancy, she shrieks and falls, c.—
Jack bows his head over her.*

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ACT SECOND.—Frisky's communings—She and Pepper have a little falling out—Pepper's pursuit of knowledge under the table—Clyde shows his colors and plays his first card, "Then my answer must be 'yes,' though it break the heart of my child."—The old man tries to drown his sorrow—Pepper goes for clams—Entrance of Lillian, "Yes, pirate though you are, and chieftain of the hunted crew, I love you still! The time will come when you will find I am the truest friend you ever had."—Aunt Becky relieves herself of a few ideas and Pepper gives her a few more—The old fisherman falls a victim to Intemperance, and Aunt Becky expresses her opinion of "sich doins."—The meeting of Clyde and St. Morris—The combat—Death of Clyde, "Oh, Heaven! I am his wife."—Tableau.

ACT THIRD.—One year later—Company expected—Pepper has a "werry curis" dream—Capt. St. Morris relates a story to Susie—Love-making interrupted by the old fisherman—His resolution to reform—Aunt Becky thinks she is 'slurred.'—Lillian communes with her own thoughts—The Colonel arrives—Pepper takes him in charge and relates a wonderful whaling story—Restoration of the stolen money—"The same face, Heavens! I cannot be mistaken." "It's all out."—The Colonel finds a daughter—He tells the story of his escape from the wreck—Old friends meet—The Colonel's proposal and acceptance. "Bress de Lawd."—Happy ending, with song and chorus.—"WAIT FOR THE TURN OF THE TIDE."

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